



STATE OF MAINE
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
1 STATE HOUSE STATION
AUGUSTA, MAINE
04333-0001

Paul R. LePage
GOVERNOR

March 28, 2013

Mayor Michael Brennan
City of Portland
389 Congress Street
Portland, Maine 04101

Dear Mayor Brennan:

I am in receipt of your letter to Attorney General Mills regarding the Baxter Academy for Technology and Science requesting her to conduct a host of inappropriate and unlawful activities designed to harass and intimidate a proposed charter school. You also state that you are requesting that the Superintendent of the Portland School District withhold payment of funds to Baxter Academy.

This letter is the latest salvo in your campaign against the proposed school and charter schools generally. I am appalled at your constant attacks upon students who simply want to better learn technology and science. Nationally, 19 of the 20 fastest growing jobs over the next decade will involve science, technology, engineering, and math. Big and small employers in the greater Portland region tell me that the lack of a work force educated in technology is stifling job creation and growth. If we are to provide our kids with an education leading to jobs here in Maine and not out of state – then we must properly educate students in these fields.

Mr. Mayor, it is a stunningly cynical and shortsighted activity to try to stop students who are so interested in learning math and science from getting the education they crave and employers are requesting.

I urge you to refocus your efforts on more productive activities and less on attacking some of Maine's most motivated students. For example, you might consider taking the proposed 31 percent increase in the District's Superintendent's office budget and redirecting this funding to replicate Portland's best science and technology programs district-wide.

Regarding your threat to withhold funding from students who wish to attend the Baxter Academy, you should seek competent legal advice before acting on this matter. I believe this advice will urge compliance with the state's charter school law, including the provision of the law mandating that "the school administrative unit in which the student resides must forward the per-pupil allocation to the public charter school attended by the student."

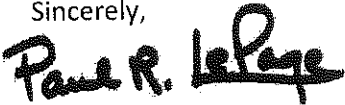


PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

Assuming the Baxter Academy passes regulatory approval by the Charter Commission and should Portland Public Schools fail to make the payments required by the charter school law, I will take the necessary steps to have the payments withheld from Portland's general purpose aid by the Treasurer of State and paid to Baxter Academy in accordance with 20-A M.R.S.A. 2413(F) and Chapter 140 of the Department's regulations.

Stop these attacks and focus on putting the student first.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul R. LePage". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Paul R. LePage
Governor, State of Maine